

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2640

Introduced by Assembly Member Gipson

February 19, 2016

An act to amend Section 122405 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to public health.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2640, as introduced, Gipson. Public health: hepatitis C.

Existing law, the Hepatitis C Education, Screening, and Treatment Act, sets forth provisions pertaining to education and outreach related to hepatitis C, as specified. Existing law sets forth the intent of the Legislature with regard to these provisions.

This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to these provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 122405 of the Health and Safety Code
- 2 is amended to read:
- 3 122405. The Legislature hereby finds and declares ~~all of~~ the
- 4 following:
- 5 (a) Hepatitis C is classified as a silent killer, where no
- 6 recognizable signs or symptoms occur until severe liver damage
- 7 has occurred.
- 8 (b) Hepatitis C has been characterized by the World Health
- 9 Organization as a disease of primary concern to humanity.

1 (c) Studies indicate that 1.8 percent of the population, nearly
2 4 million Americans, carry the virus HCV that causes hepatitis C.
3 In California, as many as 500,000 individuals may be carriers and
4 could develop the debilitating and potentially deadly liver disease
5 associated with hepatitis C in their lifetime. An expert panel,
6 convened in March by the National Institutes of Health (NIH),
7 estimated that 30,000 acute new infections occur each year in the
8 United States, and only 25 to 30 percent of those are diagnosed.
9 Current data sources indicate that 8,000 to 10,000 Americans die
10 from hepatitis C each year.

11 (d) Studies also indicate that 39.4 percent of male inmates and
12 54.5 percent of female inmates in California correctional facilities
13 have hepatitis C, 26 times higher than the general population. Upon
14 their release from prison, these inmates present a significant health
15 risk to the general population of California.

16 (e) It is the intent of the Legislature to study the adequacy of
17 the health care delivery system as it pertains to hepatitis C.

18 (f) It is the intent of the Legislature to urge the department to
19 make funds available to community-based nonprofit organizations
20 for education and outreach with respect to the hepatitis C virus.